

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 HEW-06 /038 W
----- 098607

R 071215Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2381

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS BONN 17022

E;99. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
ON COAL MINE WORKERS' COMPENSATION

REF: (A) BONN 13380; (B) STATE 181302

1. SUPPLEMENTING INFO SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF LABOR
(REF A), THE BERGBAU-BERUFGENOSSEN-
SCHAFT (COAL MINING OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION)
HAS PROVIDED US WITH ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED REF (B).
FULL TEXT IS BEING POUCHED TO ILAB; SHORT SUMMARY
FOLLOWS:

2. (A) ABOUT 209,000 MINERS WERE EMPLOYED IN 1975.
THERE WERE 70,000 CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION IN THAT YEAR
FOR SILICOSIS OR SILICO TUBERCULOSIS; MOST OF THE
CLAIMANTS WERE NO LONGER ACTIVELY EMPLOYED.

(B) SILICOSIS WAS RECOGNIZED AS AN OCCUPATIONAL
DESEASE IN 1929. AT THAT TIME THERE WERE ABOUT
611,000 MINERS ACTIVE AND ABOUT 1050 CLAIMS.

(C) APPROVAL OF A CLAIM IS THE RESULT OF A
LENGTHY PROCESS OF CONSULTATION AMONG THE WORKER, HIS
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EMPLOYER, DOCTOR, AND THE ACCIDENT INSURANCE AGENCY.

NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON CLAIM PROCESSING IS PROVIDED.

(D) A MINER WHO IS NOT CAPABLE OF WORKING BECAUSE OF SILICOSIS RECEIVES TWO-THIRDS OF HIS YEARLY SALARY. PARTIAL DISABILITY, DEFINED AS LOSS OF ONE-FIFTH OF CAPACITY OR MORE, IS COMPENSATED BY A SHARE OF YEARLY SALARY CORRESPONDING WITH THE DEGREE OF DISABILITY. DISABILITY IS DEFINED ON THE BASIS OF LUNG X-RAYS, ANALYZED ACCORDING TO THE ILO-UICC/CINCINNATI CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM OF 1971 AND DESCRIBED BY PERCENTAGE OF DISABILITY FROM 20 TO 100 PERCENT.

(E) DURING 1975, DM 634.8 MILLION WAS PAID TO VICTIMS OF SILICOSIS AND SILICO-TUBERCULOSIS. AVERAGE PAYMENT TO CLAIMANTS IN 1975 WAS ABOUT DM 9,000 FOR VICTIMS OF SILICOSIS AND DM 9,500 FOR VICTIMS OF SILICO-TUBERCULOSIS.

(F AND G) MEANINGFUL STATISTICS ON TOTAL CLAIMS ARE DIFFICULT TO ISOLATE, SINCE ANY SUSPICION OF SILICOSIS, CONFIRMED OR NOT BY PROCEDURES REFERRED IN C AND D, IS RECORDED AS A CLAIM. WITH THIS RESERVATION, 5,400 CASES WERE RECORDED IN 1975 OF WHICH 930 WERE COMPENSATED.

(H) THE FRG HAS UNDERTAKEN A CONCERTED PROGRAM OF PREVENTION, MEDICAL AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH, REHABILITATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES (COMPENSATION) TO COMBAT SILICOSIS, MAKING THE COMPENSATION PROGRAM ALONE DIFFICULT TO ISOLATE FOR EVALUATION. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, ITS PROGRAM -- IN EFFECT SINCE THE 1950'S -- HAS SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASED THE RISK OF SILICOSIS IN THE FRG.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE RAISING THESE QUESTIONS WITH FRG OFFICIALS, WE HAVE BEEN QUERIED ON COMPARATIVE US MEASURES TO COMBAT SILICOSIS AND COMPENSATE THE VICTIMS. ANY INFORMATION DEPARTMENT CAN PROVIDE ON US PROGRAMS -- PERHAPS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS RAISED UNCLASSIFIED

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IN REFTEL (B) FOR THE US SYSTEM -- WOULD BE APPRECIATED.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COAL, WORKMENS COMPENSATION INSURANCE, LABOR FORCE, LABOR DATA, MINING INDUSTRY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN17022
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760379-0052
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761074/aaaacmau.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BONN 13380, 76 STATE 181302
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 AUG 2004 by barnescd>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2004 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON COAL MINE WORKERS' COMPENSATION
TAGS: ELAB, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006